

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

February 28, 2001 LB 287

example, can I get a transplant? If I do have insurance, do most insurance programs cover that, or do they not? If I'm...if I'm poor and can't afford to get a transplant, does Medicare or Medicaid pay for it? How does the transplant system work in the first place?

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Thompson.

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you. People, this bill deals with the issue of post-transplant. People, as part of the transplant counseling process, if there's time for that, sometimes people become extremely ill, go to the hospital and have to have a transplant within a matter of days. They go to the top of the waiting lists and have priority. What happens is, for example, if you're...have a condition where you know you need a transplant and you're going to have to go on a waiting list, people go through a counseling process, and this is where they first encounter the issue that this bill brings, and that is after the transplant, which is covered, they have costs to make sure that the organ doesn't...the body doesn't reject the organ, and part of that process they must have a meeting with both a financial aid counselor and a social worker, as well as maybe...or if they're just preliminarily considering it, if it's for a kidney, they would be sent to a transplant coordinator who would give them an overview. What the transplant coordinator, who's the first point in the process, does is tell them about...briefly about some of the issues of transplantation dealing with the cost of the drugs. And a transplant coordinator who did testify said one of the things she has been seeing in recent years is that once people go back, see what their "copay" is, see what the costs to them and their families will be for the transplant drugs, they don't call her back. Other people go through the whole process where they meet with a lot of people on a team, including the social worker and the finance coordinator, and we had a social worker and a finance coordinator testify and summaries of their testimony are attached to the blue sheet on your desk, and they are the ones that talked about specific cases. The finance coordinator is a person who works with them after the transplant. And sometimes their insurance changes. Sometimes they started out with a \$5 "copay" and now it's a \$25 "copay" and they get in a financial